

Atty Docket No. 705397.15

Serial No. 09/295,935

Discussion

The application and claims are directed to solving the problem where a parent or more mature individual, while watching TV during a time period that children or less mature individuals would normally not be accessing the TV, disables the V-chip protection to watch a particular broadcast program that is prevented by the V-chip content or rating settings, and then forgets to re-enable the V-chip protection giving a child or less mature audience access to broadcast content that the parent has chosen to prevent the child from gaining access to by initially enabling the V-chip protection. The application and claims prevent the occurrence of such a mishap by allowing the parent to select time periods (selected time) during which the V-Chip content protection would be enabled and the level of content protection to be imposed during these V-Chip protection periods (selected content level). When the TV receives a broadcast signal, a logic unit, computer, or comparator would then first compare the actual time to the selected time and if the actual time is outside of the selected time period the comparator would allow the program signal to pass. If the actual time is within the selected time period the comparator would compare a broadcast content indicator with the selected content level and if the content indicator exceeds the selected content level the comparator would prevent passage of the signal.

Casement, like other previously cited references, does not utilize at the same time both a content variable and a time variable to determine whether or not to block passage of a broadcast signal or display of content. Casement either blocks display of the program based on content or blocks the display of all programs (or block complete use of the TV) based on a selected time period. Casement does not first compare the actual time to see if it falls within a selected time

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period for V-Chip protection, and if it does, then compare the content indicator with a selected level of content protection.

Moreover, Casement clearly suffers from the problem that the instant application and claims seek to overcome. In Casement, V-chip protection is either always enable or always disabled. There is no period when the V-chip is disabled by the system and then enabled by the system to protect based on content. If a user parent or other adult wants to view something that exceeds the content protection parameters during a period in which a child or other less mature view would not normally have access to the TV, the user must enter a password to disable the V-chip. If the user forgets to re-enable the V-chip, the child or less mature audience will have access to broadcast content the parent or adult intended to prevent access to.

See e.g.,

Col. 3, lines 33-43:

The system further has the capability of preventing viewers from tuning to or viewing one or more TV programs. TV programs may be blocked by channel, rating, content, and/or time. If the user turns on the TV during a locked time, or tunes to a channel with a show that contains the locked rating or content/V-chip classification (for example), the television schedule system mutes the audio and displays a solid blue screen over the TV screen. A pop-up will appear asking for the parental password. The solid blue screen will disappear, and mute will be disabled when the correct password is entered.

Col. 3, line 66 – Col. 4, line 8:

FIG. 2B shows a preferred embodiment of parental control menu 54 shown to a user when a parental password has been established, from main menu 50, and the user has entered the correct password. The user may lock TV programs by channel, by rating and/or content, or by time. If the user desires, for example, to lock by time, the user may move the cursor to the "Lock by Time" location and inputs the SELECT key. Alternatively, if programs have been locked, the user may unlock all programs that have been locked.

Col. 4, line 61—Col. 5, line 5:

The user may also lock specified time periods to prevent TV viewing during those times [this is the prevent of TV viewing in its entirety and not viewing of programs of selected content or rating as described or claimed in the subject application]. The user may further specify the frequency of the lock, e.g., for a

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single day, for Monday through Friday only, weekends only, or for every day of the week. FIG. 2E shows pop-up 62, which requests user input for the time period during which TV viewing should be prevented. As shown, the user may specify the time to begin locking (the default time is 2:30 pm), the time to end locking (the default time is 5 pm), and the frequency of the lock (the default frequency is for a single day). In the situation where the user has set these values before, the system remembers the values and displays them when pop-up 62 is shown.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections based on Casement are respectfully requested.

The undersigned looks forward to discussing Casement and the claims in greater detail if necessary in an interview. The undersigned can be reached at (949) 567-6700 to schedule an interview.

Respectfully submitted,

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